

# USDA/Rural Development

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## News Release

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### **USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES \$11.7 MILLION TO IMPROVE TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE IN ZAPATA COUNTY**

*Funds will help deploy new fiber cables*

**Washington, July 15, 2003** — Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced the awarding of an \$11,710,800 loan package that will improve telecommunication services in Zapata County, Texas.

An \$11,710,800 loan package goes to Border to Border Communications headquartered in Kerrville, Texas. Border to Border Communications is a local exchange carrier for the rural areas of Zapata and southern Webb County in Texas that serves about 850 square miles in rural South Texas. Border to Border Communications serves the areas not served by Southwestern Bell Corporation.

The USDA Rural Development funds will be used to deploy new fiber and copper cable, and make needed improvements to transmission systems in the area. Funds are provided from the USDA Rural Telephone Bank Program. The Telephone Bank and the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) telecommunications program have been building the foundation for the information superhighway in rural America for 50 years. With the assistance of the Telephone Bank and RUS, rural telecommunications companies have been able to obtain financing for the improvement and expansion of telecommunications service in rural areas.

"This loan will help support the rural infrastructure by providing reliable and affordable telephone and telecommunications services," said Bryan Daniel, Texas USDA Rural Development State Director. "It is important that we continue to build and strengthen the rural infrastructure in Texas," said Daniel "so that every technological opportunity is afforded to all Texans."

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure.

USDA Rural Development is an Equal Opportunity Lender, Provider, and Employer. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.

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*The USDA Rural Development mission area was created in 1994 and includes the Rural Business-Cooperative Service, the Rural Housing Service, and the Rural Utilities Service. Its mission is to use the resources of USDA to provide an improved quality of life for the nation's 53 million rural people.*

**For more information on USDA Rural Development programs in Texas, check our web site at  
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/tx/>.**

